

Human Resources

SECTION	SUBJECT	POLICY #		
		HR 01-01-91		
		YY	MM	DD
THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA), 2005	Integrated Accessibility Standards Requirements (IASR)	2013	10	28

Accessibility Statement of Commitment

Universal Care is committed to making its owned and managed Long Term Care and Retirement Homes accessible to individuals with disabilities by compassionately caring for our residents, patients and staff and meeting or exceeding the standards set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

This commitment will be integrated wherever possible and will ensure that persons with disabilities will benefit from same services and quality available to our residents, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors without disabilities.

Background

In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Its goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025.

Accessibility standards are being created as part of the AODA. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario need to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

The Accessibility Standards under AODA are:

- **Customer Service** – Provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities, the first standard to become law as a regulation.
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- **Information and Communications** – Create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities
- **Employment** – Incorporate accessibility practices across all stages of employment including recruitment, selection and supporting regional employees with disabilities
- **Transportation** – Make it easier to move around the Region by considering the accessibility needs of people with disabilities
- **Built Environment** – Make regional facilities and outside spaces more accessible

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The “Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation” has four areas of focus:

- General Requirements which applies to all three Standards
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation

DEFINITIONS

“Disability” - according to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act 2005 means that:

(a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth, defect, or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device^{4,5}

(b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability^{4,5}

(c) A learning disability, or a dysfunctional in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language^{4,5}

(d) A mental disorder^{4,5}

(e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety or Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”) ⁴

Any degree of physical disability may include, but not limited to:

- Diabetes mellitus
- Arthritis

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- Epilepsy
- A brain injury
- Any degree of paralysis
- Amputation
- Lack of physical coordination
- Blindness or partial visual loss
- Deafness or hard of hearing
- Both blind and deaf
- Muteness or speech impediment;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- A mental disorder.
- Breathing problems and use of O2
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety & Insurance Act, 1997.

“Customer” - any member of the public who has access to an organization’s goods, services or premises.

“Blind person” - means a person who because of blindness is dependent on a guide dog or white cane;

“Service animal” - if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability, i.e. a guide dog wearing a harness.

“Support Person” - means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. Also note that, in use of Support Persons, if a participant fee is charged (e.g. admission or registration fee) departments must clearly post advance notice of the amount, if any, payable by the accompanying Support Person(5).

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A **“barrier”** - anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability. A barrier can be physical or due to architectural design. Sometimes the way we communicate causes barriers, as can attitude, technology and policies and practices. Accessibility planning helps prevent, identify and remove those barriers.

“Accessible Formats” - formats that are an alternative to standard print and are accessible to people with disabilities. . Accessible formats may include, but are not limited to accessible electronic audio format such as DVDs, CDs, Braille, text transcripts, large print, recorded audio, and other formats accessible to persons with disabilities.

“Self Service Kiosk” – an interactive electronic terminal, including a point of sale device, intended for public use, and allows users to access one or more services or products or both; UniversalCare and its owned and managed homes shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

“Accessibility Plan” – a document approved by UniversalCare, Board of Directors and UniversalCare-AODA Council; such plan identifies and removes barriers to allow people with disabilities to access the services, policies, procedures and practices available within UniversalCare and owned and managed Homes; the plan meets the requirements under the enacted Standards of AODA and is made available to the public.

“Accessibility Standard” – is the rule under AODA that persons and organizations shall follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility of services, policies, procedures and practices.

“Web Content Accessibility Guidelines” – the World Wide Web consortium, dated December 2008 and entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

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“Communications” - the term communications as it used in the Information and Communications Standard refers to the interaction between two or more people or entities when information is provided, sent or received.

“Communication supports” - supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. Some examples include plain language formats, sign language, as well as reading out loud, captioning, or using written notes to communicate.

“Conversion ready” - refers to an electronic or digital format that assists conversion into an accessible format such as Braille, large print, audio cassettes, CDs, DVDs, etc.

“Information” - the term information as it is used in the Information and Communications Standard refers to knowledge, data and facts that convey meaning and that exist in any format such as text, audio, digital or images.

“As Soon As Practicable” - means as soon as possible given all of the circumstances after a person with a disability asks for the information in an accessible format or with communication supports.

PURPOSE

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Requirements (IASR) developed under the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 20015 (AODA) is an overarching policy and comprises:

- General Standards
- Information and Communication Standards
- Employment Standards

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- Transportation Standards (IASR, O. Reg. 191/11)

This policy is in connection with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation (429/07, 2007), also developed under AODA. (See CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD (Ontario Regulation 429/07) - HR 01-01-92).

POLICY

It is the policy of UniversalCare and the owned and managed Homes to respect and comply with The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation which establishes accessibility standards and introduces requirements for Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation.

This policy applies to all the organizations' staff who deal with the public or other third parties, as well as persons involved in developing the organization's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, whether they do so as employees, volunteers, agents or otherwise. This policy also applies to physicians, volunteers, students and all others who have a working relationship with the Home(s) and the working relationship is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity as set out in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (2007).

GUIDELINES

Accessibility Multi-Year Plan

UniversalCare and the owned and managed Homes Multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines the commitment to identify, remove and prevent barriers, as well as meeting the requirements under AODA.

Accessibility Multi-Year Plan is a living document and will be:

- Reviewed yearly for compliance

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- UniversalCare will post an annual Status Report on the progress of removing the barriers identified and measures taken to implement the Accessibility Multi-Year Plan
- Updated every 5 years
- Made public by posting it in a visible place, and on the website
- Upon request will be provided to any customer requesting it and in an accessible format, based on the need of the customer
- The revision and the updating will be done with feedback from UniversalCare, owned and managed Homes and UniversalCare-AODA Council
- The Accessibility Multi-Year Plan will be approved by UniversalCare-AODA Council, UniversalCare and the Board(s) of Directors

Procurement/Self Service Kiosks: UniversalCare shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring goods, services and self-service kiosks.

Emergency Information

UniversalCare and managed and owned Homes will provide to Emergency Procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable and upon request. This may include evacuation procedures and floor plans, information about alarms or information about other incidents that may threaten life, property, operations or the environment.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

UniversalCare and the owned and managed Homes shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

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If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee’s consent, the employer shall provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the employer to provide assistance to the employee. UniversalCare and owned and managed Homes administration (the employer) shall provide the information required as soon as practicable after the employer becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee’s disability.

UniversalCare and owned and managed Homes administration (the employer) shall review the individualized workplace emergency response information,

- when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- when the employee’s overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

(Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Section 27. (1))

Training

Training will be provided on the requirements of the Accessibility Standards referred to in the Integrated Accessibility Standards and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities to,

- all employees, and volunteers;
- all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.
- third party contractors

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Each organization under the umbrella of UniversalCare will keep records of the training and the attendance. The training will be done upon hire, annually thereafter and at request.

If any changes are made to the policies, procedures and practices, the training content will also be revised and will be provided to employees, volunteers, all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization and third party contractors.

Feedback

UniversalCare has processes in place for receiving and responding to feedback and will ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

This will allow that the feedback processes are available to people with disabilities in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports, on request and will notify the public.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

UniversalCare and managed and owned Homes, upon request will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. This will be performed in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability and where applicable at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons without disabilities.

Website and Web Content

Websites and internet websites controlled directly UniversalCare, or through a contract relationship that allows for modification, will confirm to the World Wide Web Consortium

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Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA (in accordance with the Information and Communication Standard).

Employment

UniversalCare, owned and managed and Homes will create a working environment that respects the requirements set out in the Employment Standard and Ontario Human Rights Code to accommodate people with disabilities.

This will apply to recruitment policies, procedures and processes, performance management, return to work, redeployment, career development and individual accommodation plans.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Revision of the program will be reviewed annually for the content and the effectiveness. This will include:

- Policies and Procedures
- Accessibility Multi-Year Plan
- Feedback (Resident/Employee Survey)

Revision Date	Related Policies and Procedures
Day/Year/Month 20/2014/06	CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD (Ontario Regulation 429/07)-HR 01-01-92 UniversalCare - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Council- HR 01-01-95- CQI 01-21